



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

April 17, 2020

Dear Superintendent/Executive Director,

During this stressful and uncertain time, RIDE is outlining LEA flexibilities in how to complete educator evaluations for the 2019-20 school year. Our goal is to provide flexibility that honors the work already done to close out evaluations for this school year, minimizing impact on educator caseloads for SY 20-21. RIDE has consulted with representatives from LEAs and teachers' unions to provide the following flexibilities for LEAs to employ as they finalize teacher and support professional evaluations for SY 19-20:

- **Professional Practice:** Many educators have participated in at least two observations prior to March. However, we recognize that this is not the case in all LEAs, so we provide the following options:
 - *If only one observation was completed thus far in the school year:* The scores from one observation could count toward the full Professional Practice score.
 - Note: An educator who received only one observation may want to be added to next year's caseload instead. LEAs and educators should discuss this possibility and agree on how they will handle this locally. Evaluation information from SY 19-20 school year could also move forward to the following year.
 - *If the educator received two observations thus far in the school year:* The scores from both observations will be averaged for a Professional Practice score.
 - *If an LEA would like to include a virtual second or third observation before the end of SY 19-20.* While this is not required, the LEA may consider developing local guidance, in conjunction with their DEC, to virtually observe their educators. A second or third virtual observation score would be averaged with existing scores that occurred prior to distance learning. When determining whether this is an option, LEAs and DEC's must consider that neither evaluators nor teachers have received any specialized training to conduct evaluations in a distance learning environment. Therefore, it is recommended that this option only be available after careful consideration and agreement.
- **Professional Responsibilities (for LEAs that use a RI Model evaluation model):** Ratings should still be determined based on the evidence and artifacts provided. LEAs and DEC's should discuss any opportunities that may have been lost to educators since moving to distance learning and ensure sufficient opportunities still exist to meeting the LEA expectations in this area.
 - **Student Learning:** It is necessary to provide a *one-time exception* to scoring Student Learning options under these extenuating circumstances. To calculate the Final Effectiveness Rating (FER), all educators who are being evaluated using SLOs/SOOs or one of the new student learning options, will receive two "3s" or "Meets Expectations." Similarly, for Innovation Consortium LEAs using the Embedded Practice model, element 3.5 will receive a '3.' This is intended to neutralize the scoring process to maintain the integrity of the system. LEAs, in conjunction with their DEC's, may outline an opportunity for educators who believe they were on-track to earn higher than a 3/3 combination, they can work with their evaluator to submit



Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
DEPARTMENT OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
Shepard Building
255 Westminster Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

additional assessment data to show results of student learning that would be used by the evaluator to potentially determine a higher score.

- **Performance Improvement Plans (PIPs):** If an educator is currently on a PIP for SY 19-20, they will continue to remain on their PIP for SY 20-21, regardless of their FER for this year. This is to ensure that struggling and/or developing educators continue to receive support. However, local decisions may be made to review/evaluate the PIP at the end of the SY 19-20 or at the end of the first quarter in SY 20-21 to terminate a PIP if enough evidence is present to do so.

Please note that the flexibilities outlined above should also be applied to finalizing building administrator evaluations. Building administrators, teachers, and support professionals who have questions about their evaluations should contact their primary evaluators for more information about how these LEA flexibilities will be applied to them.

In the coming weeks, we will provide guidance for LEAs on how to submit evaluation data to RIDE for the 2019-20 school year. LEAs will upload evaluation data files to eRIDE as they have done in the past.

For LEAs that would like technical assistance with completing evaluations this year, please reach out to edeval@ride.ri.gov so that we can work with you through this process.